



MIDDLEBOROUGH

Plymouth County

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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Middleborough is a 70-square mile historic industrial town on the Nemasket River and was a major native settlement area used for seasonal fishing, hunting, and berry gathering. The town is one of only a handful of southeastern Massachusetts communities that retained a sizeable Indian population throughout the Colonial period. The first European settler was Sir Christopher Gardner, a fugitive from English justice who settled among the Nemasket Indians in 1633. When he was captured and returned to England, it was several years before a small group of white settlers led by Elizabeth Poole established themselves within the town.

Agriculture, fishing, hunting and some lumbering were the main occupations of early settlers and as Indian settlements dwindled, the town's industries grew. There was a good deal of bog iron found in Middleborough which stimulated the iron and mill industries. A large self-contained industrial complex was developed by Judge Peter Oliver, including a blast furnace, forge, slitting mill, blacksmith, finishing and hammer shops, grist mill and fuel storage, all of which, along with a country estate, was confiscated when Oliver fled the Revolution as a loyalist.

Although the iron industry dominated the Federal period, Middleborough also made shovels, textiles, straw bonnets and woollens. Immigrant populations of Swedes, Italians, Canadians and Armenians followed the industrial jobs available. After the Civil War, the town became a rail center, attracting industrial development, lumbering, box mills, brick making and the well-known Maxim Motor Company which has been producing fire trucks since 1914. Town officials have recently approved six parcels as sites for industrial parks and the town plans to embark on an aggressive campaign to bring businesses in to offset the major suburban residential development the town has experienced in recent years.

Visitors to Middleborough now can enjoy the partially restored Oliver Mills Park on the site of Judge Oliver's industrial complex and follow the spring herring run which brings thousands of alewives upstream to spawn.

Residents are particularly proud of the historic museums in town which feature recreations of 19th century homes, historic fire engines, Nemasket Indian artifacts, toy trains and memorabilia of the famous midgets General Tom Thumb and his wife, a native of the town.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Southeastern Massachusetts, bordered by Bridgewater and Halifax on the north; Plympton and Carver on the east; Wareham on the southeast; Rochester on the south; and Lakeville, Taunton, and Raynham on the west. Middleborough is 35 miles south of Boston; 22 miles north of New Bedford; 30 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island; and 205 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 72.31 sq. miles

Land Area: 69.56 sq. miles

Population: 17,867

Density: 257 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Taunton Station)

Normal temperature in January.....25.9°F

Normal temperature in July.....71.2°F

Normal annual precipitation.....46.7"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Bridgewater, Snipatuit Pond, Plympton, Assawompset Pond

Regional Planning Agency

Southeastern Regional Planning and
Economic Development District

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Brockton



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 947-0928

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Manager

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1669

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	8,927		
Democrats	1,859	20.8	%
Republicans	1,429	16.0	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	5,639	63.2	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Middleborough town, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	19,941	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	19,941	100.0
Male.....	9,784	49.1	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	156	0.8
Female.....	10,157	50.9	Mexican.....	27	0.1
Under 5 years.....	1,391	7.0	Puerto Rican.....	67	0.3
5 to 9 years.....	1,573	7.9	Cuban.....	14	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	1,623	8.1	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	48	0.2
15 to 19 years.....	1,349	6.8	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	19,785	99.2
20 to 24 years.....	964	4.8	White alone.....	19,057	95.6
25 to 34 years.....	2,852	14.3	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	3,680	18.5	Total population.....	19,941	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	2,859	14.3	In households.....	19,410	97.3
55 to 59 years.....	987	4.9	Householder.....	6,981	35.0
60 to 64 years.....	610	3.1	Spouse.....	3,937	19.7
65 to 74 years.....	987	4.9	Child.....	6,553	32.9
75 to 84 years.....	762	3.8	Own child under 18 years.....	4,968	24.9
85 years and over.....	304	1.5	Other relatives.....	918	4.6
Median age (years).....	35.6	(X)	Under 18 years.....	345	1.7
18 years and over.....	14,423	72.3	Nonrelatives.....	1,021	5.1
Male.....	6,914	34.7	Unmarried partner.....	513	2.6
Female.....	7,509	37.7	In group quarters.....	531	2.7
21 years and over.....	13,822	69.3	Institutionalized population.....	424	2.1
62 years and over.....	2,397	12.0	Noninstitutionalized population.....	107	0.5
65 years and over.....	2,053	10.3	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	806	4.0	Total households.....	6,981	100.0
Female.....	1,247	6.3	Family households (families).....	5,114	73.3
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	2,683	38.4
One race.....	19,679	98.7	Married-couple family.....	3,937	56.4
White.....	19,168	96.1	With own children under 18 years.....	2,010	28.8
Black or African American.....	252	1.3	Female householder, no husband present.....	852	12.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	51	0.3	With own children under 18 years.....	503	7.2
Asian.....	87	0.4	Nonfamily households.....	1,867	26.7
Asian Indian.....	23	0.1	Householder living alone.....	1,423	20.4
Chinese.....	9	-	Householder 65 years and over.....	516	7.4
Filipino.....	28	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	2,944	42.2
Japanese.....	5	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	1,352	19.4
Korean.....	8	-	Average household size.....	2.78	(X)
Vietnamese.....	4	-	Average family size.....	3.23	(X)
Other Asian ¹	10	0.1	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	7	-	Total housing units.....	7,249	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	2	-	Occupied housing units.....	6,981	96.3
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	1	-	Vacant housing units.....	268	3.7
Samoan.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	4	-	occasional use.....	54	0.7
Some other race.....	114	0.6	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.5	(X)
Two or more races.....	262	1.3	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	4.3	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	6,981	100.0
White.....	19,363	97.1	Owner-occupied housing units.....	5,170	74.1
Black or African American.....	343	1.7	Renter-occupied housing units.....	1,811	25.9
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	140	0.7	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.96	(X)
Asian.....	120	0.6	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.28	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	22	0.1			
Some other race.....	231	1.2			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	190
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	3
Federal (Section 8):	154



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Middleborough lies in the heart of the Old Colony Region between Boston and Cape Cod. The major highways are State Route 3 and Interstate 495, which give access to the airport, port, and intermodal facilities of the Greater Boston Region.

Major Highways

Principal highways are U.S. Route 44, which connects Plymouth to Providence, Rhode Island; State Routes 28, 79, and 105; and Interstate Route 495/State Route 25 combined.

Rail

Commuter rail service to South Station, Boston, will be available in 1996-97 on the Middleborough Line. The Bay Colony Railroad (BCRR) and Conrail provide freight rail service and interchange traffic in Middleborough. Contact number for the Bay Colony: (617) 380-3556; for Conrail: (617) 783-6222.

Bus

Middleborough is a member of the Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Authority (GATRA), which provides Dial-A-Ride service to the elderly and disabled. Bay State Commuter Lines provides frequent commuter service to Boston as well as limited additional passenger service daily.

Other

The Plymouth Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, is easily accessible. It has 2 asphalt runways 2,501'x 75' and 3,501'x 75'. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

Robbins Museum of Archaeology

17 Jackson Street

(508) 947-9005

Middleborough Historical Association

Jackson Street

(508) 947-1969

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

Alpha Village L.T.C. Facility
Greenery R & SNC Of Middleboro
Greenlawn Nursing Home
Hanna B G Shaw Home For Aged
Meadow View Nursing Home
Oak Hill Nursing & Rehab. Center

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

Fair Havens Rest Home
Middleboro Rest Home
The Ann Lewis Rest Home, Inc.

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.